



Arizona Rock Products Association

Wednesday, July 21, 2010
Remarks by Gov. Jan Brewer

Thank you for allowing me to spend some time with you today -- to tell you what we've achieved in the past 500 days since I took the oath of office as Governor.

First, we had to deal with the consequences of five high-rolling years BEFORE I took office, when the system grew government as large as possible.

I faced a state budget deficit of nearly five billion dollars across two fiscal years -- and a federal government whose unfunded mandates and sweetheart deals were stealing Arizona's freedom and threatening to bankrupt our state.

Wholesale change was needed, and, the truth is, in the past 500 days, Arizona HAS changed.

We've changed everything.

We've changed the size of government.

We've changed the way government does business.

We've changed our policies and our priorities and the direction of our state.

I believe that change -- the Arizona Comeback -- started in earnest on May 18th when voters approved Proposition 100, telling us our faith in them had been well placed.

They told us they understood the depth of the financial crisis in Arizona.

They told us they did it for our educational system, for our universities and community colleges, for our public safety and for our most vulnerable.

But, I think we all recognize that Proposition 100 isn't a cure-all. Though we've streamlined and reduced the size of government more than at any time before in state history, we're still faced with difficult choices.

Even with Proposition 100, the state still faces a ONE BILLION DOLLAR deficit going into fiscal year 2012, which without new action will continue to grow in FY 2013.

So, what are we doing about it?

Plenty.

In these past 500 days, we've permanently reduced state general fund spending by over two point two billion dollars and the state employee count by more than 10 percent.

By Executive Order, I established the Arizona Commerce Authority and a private-sector leadership board focused on growing and diversifying Arizona's economy and creating quality jobs – including rural Arizona.

The Arizona Commerce Department is being replaced by this quasi-public Authority as we introduce a 21st Century approach to advance Arizona's economy.

At the same time, we're sending a message to the world that Arizona is a premier place in which to locate, expand and grow, as we become more aggressive in attracting new industry and jobs to this State, and focused on helping our Arizona companies thrive.

My Commission on Privatization and Efficiency (COPE), established in January of this year, is examining ways to streamline state government operations, soliciting ideas from the private sector, policy experts, and citizens.

Arizona citizens deserve the best and most effective government in return for their hard-earned tax dollars.

COPE was created to identify state services and agencies whose functions can be eliminated, consolidated, streamlined or outsourced to achieve greater operational efficiency in meeting the needs of our citizens.

We're already laser-focused on getting Arizona back on track -- bolstering our base industries -- advancing our competitive position in the global economy.

We attracted over \$1.1 billion in new capital investment.

AND, we attracted NEW companies to Arizona -- creating 25-hundred new jobs for Arizonans.

Businesses across ALL sectors have added 25-thousand jobs since the job loss peak of December 2009.

My first official act as Governor was to issue a moratorium on rules, to reduce the regulatory burden on Arizona businesses.

And -- I know most of you know this -- I've been calling for tax reform since March 2009.

We MUST establish a more friendly tax code to retain existing employers, attract new investment capital and create high wage, SUSTAINABLE jobs.

We must continue this work, and I will not rest until it's done.

I support a responsible package to spur job creation and our state's economic recovery

-- but it MUST be a package that the state can AFFORD.

From my first days in office as Governor, I've been demanding that Washington fulfill its primary obligation to the citizens of our state:

-- Secure our southern border, enhance the rule of law, and protect Arizonans -- and ALL Americans -- from violence committed by organized crime syndicates, out-of-control drug cartels, violent human smugglers, and common criminals.

And, now, Arizona is under attack in federal court from President Obama and his Department of Justice because I signed Senate Bill 1070 into law.

This is nothing more than a massive waste of taxpayer funds which SHOULD be used against the violent Mexican cartels rather than the people of Arizona.

No matter how opponents of 1070 try to spin it, the law does not regulate differently than current federal law, nor does it pre-empt federal law in any way.

-- No new or additional documents are required to visit Arizona.

-- The same documents that the federal government currently requires for legal immigrants are required under the state law.

And the boycotts?

How could punishing families and businesses large and small --- particularly the 200,000 hard-working families involved in the tourism industry --- be a solution or be viewed as constructive?

I will defend this law against every assault – including attacks by the Obama administration.

Half of all illegal crossings occur at the Arizona border. And what's the President's response? He sues Arizona AND he posts warning signs on lands INSIDE our state -- some as close as 30 miles to Phoenix – telling our CITIZENS to keep out!

That's not protection -- that's SURRENDER!

Mr. President, do your job. SECURE OUR BORDER!

As for me, I am not surrendering. I am going to continue to do everything in my power to protect this state.

No apologies. No quitting. No retreat.

And, I'll tell you something else. We're not going to continue to pick up the tab.

We're now transferring back to the Federal Government non-violent criminal aliens housed in the Department of Corrections.

These transfers have saved the taxpayers well over thirteen million dollars this fiscal year and have helped alleviate prison overcrowding.

I'm also fighting ObamaCare and the eleven billion dollars it will cost Arizona over the next decade.

Health Care regulation is a power reserved to the STATES by the 10th Amendment.

Congress has OVERREACHED by REQUIRING individuals to purchase health insurance -- and penalizing them if they don't.

We have joined this lawsuit because the issue is just too important for our State to sit back and do nothing.

I told you we've changed our policies and our priorities throughout state government, and that includes strengthening Arizona's education system.

You know, education is what led me to run for public office years ago.

And ever since, I've been fighting to give families more opportunities to help their children learn.

In my State of the State address, I called for a series of reforms to both our K-12 and higher education systems, and we've now we had one of the most productive legislative sessions ever for advancing reforms to our school system.

And, we've done much more:

- "Operation Clean Sweep" has inmates picking up trash along our highways.

- Our ArizonaSERVES Task Force is coordinating statewide volunteer efforts with faith-based and community organizations assisting those in need in our communities.

- We've protected the Sanctity of Life.

- We've supported Arizona as a Right-to-Work State.

- We've protected Second Amendment Rights -- expanding gun owner rights to carry firearms while respecting private property rights.

- We've brought traditional values back to our young people, restoring abstinence-only sex education in our schools.

- And we've supported traditional marriage.

- I've thrown my support behind the Resolution Mine land exchange proposal.

- I've backed my Department of Environmental Quality issuing permits for uranium mining in northern Arizona.

- And, we're saving the very important mineral collection in the Mine and Mineral Museum by assembling a broader coalition of Arizona industries to raise private capital and create a Centennial Museum based on the 5 C's.

Now, I believe that is real conservatism -- conservatism that is pragmatic, sound, responsible, honest, tough, and truthful -- one which understands government is not the answer to all of our woes.

I will not let circumstances or politics -- or what's popular -- define me. I will not let others tell you who I am.

The simple truth is, what it has always been: I am Jan Brewer, a conservative -- a pragmatic conservative.

I am Jan Brewer, the proud daughter of Wilford and Edna Drinkwine -- common Americans who worked hard, asked for nothing in return, and made silent sacrifices for the common good.

They were the whole world to me -- my teachers, my guides, forever with me on every road and journey.

I am Jan Brewer -- a legislator, a county supervisor, a Secretary of State and a Governor who will always tell you the truth -- someone who always tries to do the right thing, no matter how hard the choices.

I am Jan Brewer, the Governor who changed everything about state government -- Its priorities -- Its spending habits -- Its size and its culture.

Arizona's spirit, and its great ideals, remind us that our blessings far surpass our challenges.

They remind us that our calling is to hold those blessings in sacred trust for a better life for the generations yet to come.

I invite you to join me in that calling as we journey together, one people, under God ... on the road less traveled.

May God bless you, and your families and may God bless the great state of Arizona.

Thank you.